

**CREATIVITY REVOLUTIONIZED -- A HANDS-ON DEEP DIVE:**

**Exercises in attuning for creativity  
&  
the real consequences of creativity for teaching entrepreneurship**

**Iain Kerr**  
SPURSE +

FELICIANO CENTER FOR  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
Montclair State University

## **1. WARM UP: PRELIMINARY RULES OF THUMB TO APPROACH CREATIVITY:**

1. Work across differing frameworks, cosmologies & paradigms (learn, collect, develop)
2. Avoid beginning with moral or factual judgements (follow)
3. Focus: “What can it do?” Not: “What “is” it?” (test, experiment, observe, multiply)
4. Put change at the heart of thinking: Feel, sense, see change & dynamics at all scales
5. Everything is both subject and object -- switch perspectives and see systems
6. Causality isn’t linear -- it is crazy. Avoid reducing things to essences, magic bullets, or origins (work at a systems scale)

### **What does this mean for entrepreneurship?**

*new skills needed:*

Systems thinking  
Framework switching  
Suspend judgement  
Broad focus (beyond solutions + products)

*The skills of:*

philosophy, ecology, anthropology, design thinking, making

In a word: be **WORLDLY**(be of a world not “the world”)

### **Resources:**

Philip Descola *Beyond Nature Culture*  
Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems*  
Daniel Kish (watch on youtube)  
Susan Oyama, *Cycles of Contingency: Developmental Systems Theory & Evolution*  
Marshall McLuhan, *The Medium is the Message*

## **2. CREATIVITY BEGINS IN PARADOX / EMERGENCE**

1. Change relations and new qualities emerge (experimentally change relationships -- techniques)
2. Change bodies and new qualities emerge (experimentally transform bodies -- forms, habits, techniques)
3. Things open up the possibility of entering a new world (Technologies are world making -- world opening tools before they are simply things -- experiment with tools to open worlds)
4. Think of all qualities as relational -- better yet think of qualities as "AFFORDANCES" -- they afford (allow) something to happen -- (develop the habit of locating qualities in the middle of an event -- experiment from the event out)
5. Creativity always involves making new affordances -- which cannot be known in advance

### **What this means for Entrepreneurship:**

Creativity involves worldly emergence. We can only know the new by doing, therefore ideation follows after experimentation. Ideation alone, or as "problem solving" is a dead end...

The goal of tools (technology) is not to solve a problem but to make new possibilities emerge. These possibilities are relational. Relational emergence = world, ecosystem.

Creativity needs ecosystem building.

### **Resources:**

Evan Thompson, Mind in Life (especially final section on emergence)  
J.J. Gibson, The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception

### **3. CREATIVITY = MATTER MATTERS**

#### ***SO -- What is Creativity?***

"The EMERGENT **PROCESS** that creates something *genuinely new*"

1. It is not in your head
2. It does not emerge out of thin air
3. It is a feature of reality that we can find everywhere

#### **What this means for Entrepreneurship:**

Fostering creative processes: We need to move away from thinking of creativity as a thing -- especially a mysterious internal property to be "unlocked". Center of creative practices are entangled emergent processes.

#### **Key Values:**

Becoming over being  
Novelty over eternity  
Emergence over something/nothing dichotomy  
Sensitive to the liberating force of life, chaos, difference and creativity over the forces of law, order, repetition, and sameness  
Joining, Following, Emerging with....

#### **Resources:**

A. N. Whitehead Process & Reality  
Isabel Stengers, Thinking with Whitehead  
Nagarjuna, *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* (Fundamental Verses of the Middle Way)

#### 4. CREATIVITY IS BLOCKAGE & SIDEWAYS MOVEMENTS

- Nothing evolved for its current purpose -- BETRAYAL
- Nothing has a “purpose” (or essence) -- AGNOSTIC
- Does not solve an existing “problem” -- ANTI-UTILITARIAN
- It produces a new way of being in the world -- WORLD MAKING

#### ***CREATIVITY = A WORLDMAKING ANTI-UTILITARIAN AGNOSTIC BETRAYAL***

- Creation is iterative (but not linear)
- Moves sideways
- Crosses thresholds from difference in degree to difference in kind
- It utilizes non-intended capacities and betrays purpose
- It is “networked” and relational (has no single author)
- It co-evolves with an environment (not adapting)
- It is not simply a human mental capacity (“ideation” centric)
- The “outcome” cannot be known in advance (& is not the final “purpose”)
- The origin of anything need not have any purpose, nor does it directly relate to its current use
- The most interesting “traits” are NON-ADAPTIVE --they are world opening (for a world that does NOT YET EXIST!)
- Needs a space that protects novelty (THE LAB) -- keeps it away from “survival of the fittest” experiments/situations -- and keep it away from having to be “something” as long as possible (needs to iteratively betray multiple “identities”)
- Needs a PIRATE PROJECT (NEVER a pilot project (at this stage)) E.g. “we are making a wing for egg warming” -- not false but a *probe into the unknown* -- open ended -- perturbing a field -- activating emergent unknowable (in advance) potentials -- and then transforming with them...

#### **Resources:**

Dogtown & Z-Boys (documentary)

El Bulli: Cooking in Progress (documentary)

Christian Markley (look up interview with artist on youtube)

Steven Jay Gould, The Structure of Evolutionary Theory (see section of “Exaptation”)

## 5. CREATIVITY IS PARADIGMATIC

**Creativity** = The “MAKING” of something *really* new AND the *realization* that you have not just made something novel, but an entirely new way of being in the world  
*(PARADIGM)*

- Odd (wrong, does not fit, stupid, etc.)
- Can be an accident
- Can be really bad (quality)
- Can be trivial (seemingly)

Note: these are all relational ideas (and they relate to the standards of a field, which they “oppose”)

OK -- so you perceive something as being odd for the first time -- now what happens?

1. It produces a CRISIS -- a rupture.
2. It's not necessarily true
3. It must be Exemplary
4. Sufficiently Unprecedented
5. Open-ended with lots of Problems
6. Joins what were thought to be very unrelated problems

### **Why is this so hard?**

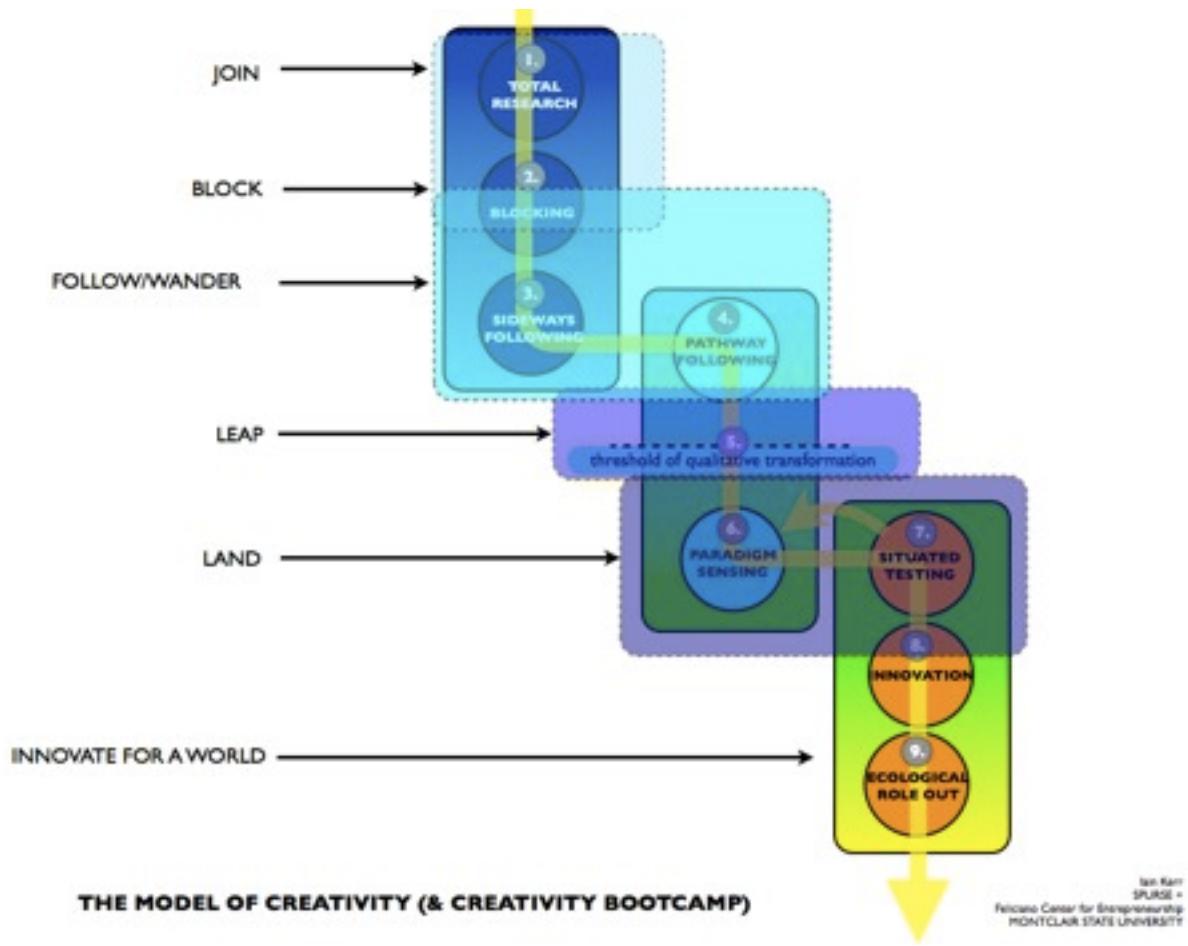
Because all of our actions are part of a self reinforcing system that really works

What are you seeing? *A portal -- a doorway.* Is it an innovation? *No -- the doorway opens to a path.* What do you need to do? *Follow it -- stop being a leader and become a follower!*

*Remember Innovating comes after one develops a paradigm...*

### **Resources:**

Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (the origin of paradigm thinking)



## THE PROCESS SIMPLIFIED

## REVIEW

### You need to develop a PROCESS that:

1. Utilizes deliberate Blockages & unintended capacities  
Keep developing new blockages at every stage that moves one sideways  
Be “networked” (beyond the human, without an author)  
Don’t look for concepts in your head  
Ideas follow materials & events (not the other way around)  
Remember that the new cannot be known in advance  
You will have to be willing to Betray  
Work with LOST (Lab of Sideways Transformation) & a series of PIRATE PROJECTS as probes to pathways (paradigms)
2. Change relations or bodies and new qualities will emerge  
Qualities emerge from the middle of relations  
Things open up the possibility of entering a new world
3. Change the definition of Seeing to *pattern recognition*  
See Systems: look beyond the players to the rules of the game  
Don’t assume. Zoom out & figure out the context  
Flip through perspectives & develop new perspectives
4. Invents New Problems:  
Focuses on Pathways: way making and way-following  
Strives for new paradigms & processes before focusing on “products”  
Learn to meet worlds and become a worldmaker (paradigmatic creativity)  
Innovation comes only after having a world
5. & Remember: You **can't** get to new pathways and paradigms by:
  - Asking people what they need
  - Solving existing problems
  - Focusing directly on the Product
  - Brainstorming
  - Working Alone

Need a workshop model (Bootcamp) to get students to move into these logics. Our models of teaching need to structurally transform to support both Creativity and Entrepreneurship that can evolve:

***problems worth having for worlds worth making***